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JESUS' WAY

An Appreciation of the Teaching in the Synoptic Gospels

BY

WILLIAM DEWITT HYDE

PRESIDENT OF BOWDOIN COLLEGE

But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. — ACTS ix. 1, 2.

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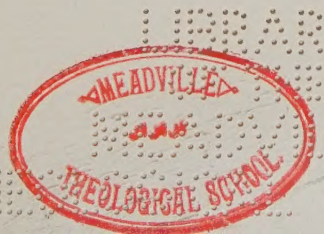

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PREFACE

BEFORE Paul had cast it into a theology, or "John" had developed it into a philosophy; before the Catholic had organized it into an institution, or the Protestant had stereotyped it into a creed, primitive Christianity was known simply as the Way. Jesus lived his life originally, successfully; in love to God and man. In living this gentle, generous, joyous life, he struck out a Way he wanted every one to know and share. A Way of life, like the trade of a carpenter or the art of a musician, has certain principles and laws, discovered by experience, and as precepts capable of being taught. These precepts are not arbitrary impositions to be enforced by pains and penalties. Nothing was farther from Jesus'

purpose than to be such a taskmaster over the consciences of men. Because his Way could not be had apart from the principles on which it rests, Jesus gave himself, eagerly and enthusiastically, to the work of teaching and preaching them.

These principles of the Way were to him what the laws of navigation are to the sailor, and the laws of perspective to the artist: helps in doing the thing he most delighted to do. Though to the outsider these principles may seem like a yoke and a burden, yet, viewed as essential conditions of living the noblest and happiest life, even the yoke becomes, to all who wear it rightly, easy; and the burden light to all who catch the spirit of his Way.

The most obvious advantage of a return to the primitive view of Christianity as a Way of life, rather than an ecclesiastical institution or a system of theological or philosophic doctrine, is the experimental

basis it gives to the Christian life. In all matters of experience proof follows, does not precede, the test. A man, for instance, cavils at golf. The golf enthusiast is dumb, if he be wise. He knows it is of no use to argue with his critic. His only chance is to entice him on to the links, put the driver in his hand, and then, if the caviler makes one good drive, the chances are ten to one that he will become a devotee of the sport, which, in advance of personal experience, he boastfully despised. Proof founded on experience cannot be refuted or denied. Yet since experience comes first and proof second in all practical matters, industrial, artistic, intellectual, moral, spiritual, we must take our initial experience as the golfer takes his first drive, as the swimmer takes his first stroke, in advance of demonstration, on the recommendation of others who have had the experience; or, as Jesus, Paul, Augus-

tine, Luther; and Paulsen, Harnack, Sabatier, and James in our day, tell us, on faith.

Jesus' Way is simply one of many possible ways in which a man may live. Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of people have tried it and found it superior to any other way of life they have experienced or can conceive. Their experience and testimony create a strong presumption in its favor. One's own lack of experience is no argument against it. The responsibility rests entirely on the will of the individual. If a man does not skate, the fault is not with the laws of motion or the properties of ice. It is because he does not believe it is worth while to put on the skates, and take a few incidental falls. Precisely so, if a man is not a Christian, he cannot, in these days of the supremacy of the empirical method, throw the blame on to anything so respecta-

ble as intellectual difficulties, or conscientious scruples, or theological doubts. That pretext was in good repute twenty or thirty years ago; but with the shifting of emphasis from doctrine to life, from adventitious signs and evidences, against which Jesus warned his disciples, to the individual and personal experience to which he always appealed, the intellectual grounds for neglect of the Christian Way of life have been removed. If a man is not a Christian, living according to the principles which Jesus taught, it is simply because he does not rightly understand Jesus' Way; or else because he has found some other way of life which he likes, or pretends to like, better. There is no valid intellectual objection to essential Christianity. For Christianity is a Way of life, an experience, like music and painting, like golf and tennis, like hunting and fishing. The fact that all men who have had deep experience

of it like it, and that it works out satisfactory results in character, conduct, peace, and happiness, is the great argument for it. That a great many people have never tried it, and do not care to try it, is no more of an argument against it than color-blind people are an argument against painting, or deafness is a refutation of music's claims and charms.

The prevalent confusion on this point has come from mixing up scientific and historical with strictly moral and spiritual matters. Men who are utterly devoid of intellectual seriousness, who have never touched so much as the tips of their intellectual fingers to the heavy burdens of scientific and historical scholarship, stoutly profess their "faith," as they miscall it, in discredited scientific theories and disproved historical assumptions: and then call those who run not with them in this excess of intellectual riot infidels and unbelievers.

True faith is a very different thing from this stupid, stultifying profession that one believes what is traditional, or respectable, or profitable to believe about the way the world was created, or the Bible was composed, or this or that particular event happened two or three thousand years ago. Faith is the trust of an inexperienced pupil in his expert teacher; the response of the apprentice to the word of the master. Religious faith is the outgoing of a good impulse within us toward accomplished goodness in God and good men in the world outside.

A good life, like that of Jesus, is the only adequate expression of his Way. For the life is the Way in successful operation. The teaching of the principles of the Way, apart from the life in which they are embodied, is comparatively dry and fruitless. Jesus fused the teaching and the life in his wondrous personality. His gath-

ered sayings constitute the most precious literary treasures of the world. Yet they derive their value to-day from the interpretation given to them by the lives of his faithful followers.

This little book takes off from the slender biographical thread on which they are loosely strung, out of the alloy of picture and parable in which they are artistically coined, apart from the gilded margin of miracle in which they are elaborately framed, the two hundred or more precepts of which the teaching of Jesus, as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, is composed; and groups them together, freely translated, under a dozen heads, according to their logical relations and common-sense proportions. The task is simple: for these sayings lie plain upon the surface, where he who runs may read. Yet as a dozen artists make as many different pictures of the same landscape, in a work like this emphasis, per-

spective, point of view, count for so much that no two persons who might attempt it would get the same result. Hence I have called the outcome an appreciation; a term intended to cover whatever sins of omission or commission the personal equation may have introduced.

Teaching spiritual things through the printed page is so difficult and unpromising, not to say impossible, a task, that I must ask the reader to interpret each statement in the light of his own experience, in case he has experience on the subject treated; and in case he has not, in terms of the experience of the best Christian he ever knew, — father, mother, teacher, friend; living or dead. For the real Bible, and the only illuminating commentary upon it, is the life of men and women in whom Jesus' Way is reproduced. Even the Sacred Scriptures are but the reflection of such lives; and of course a book like this, at its

best, is only the reflection of a reflection; a mere guide-post pointing in the direction of the Life which is the Way.

WILLIAM DEWITT HYDE.

BOWDOIN COLLEGE, BRUNSWICK, MAINE.
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CHAPTER I

THE FATHER: THE PRINCIPLE OF THE WAY

"At that season Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him." Matthew xi. 25–27.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Matthew v. 8.

"Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matthew v. 44, 45, 48.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Matthew vii. 11.

"Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them." Matthew vi. 26.

"But the father said to his servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and make merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." Luke xv. 22–24.

"And the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares? And he said unto them, An enemy hath done this." Matthew xiii. 27, 28.

JESUS' WAY

CHAPTER I

THE FATHER: THE PRINCIPLE OF THE WAY

THERE are two ways to live. One may seek first, last, and all the time, to gratify his appetites, indulge his passions, and gain his selfish ends; heedless of the bitter privation, injury, and anguish his greed and pride and lust wreak on those who cross his cruel path or fall into his hard and heartless hands. Until a very few generations ago, our human forefathers, and of course

all our animal ancestors before them, lived for the most part this life of simple sensuous selfishness. Even in the highly evolved circle of twentieth century respectability to which it is our boast to belong, there is enough of this way of life left over to reinforce our innate tendencies in this direction by abundant suggestion from without; and to give some show of excuse to those slanderers of the race, the theologians, who, dwelling too exclusively on this aspect of our racial inheritance, have developed the doctrines of total depravity and original sin.

So long as the race lived in this way, so far as any man lives in this way to-day, neither man nor God can be seen aright. For the selfish, sen-

sual man, since he recognizes no will, respects no rights, appreciates no interests other than his own, thereby ignores and denies, so far as it is possible to do so, all personality in the world except the tiny spark of it he feels within himself. Nature to such a man is a mere shop full of tools accidentally adapted to serve his selfish ends. Among these tools, the most cunningly constructed and serviceable of them all, he finds, to be sure, beings whose external resemblance to himself leads him to call men and women. Yet, inasmuch as they are treated as mere means to his selfish ends, he does not recognize them as brothers and sisters, with feelings as real and wills as valid as his own. Still less can he find, either in nature or in human

history and human institutions, any trace of a heavenly Father. So far as his impure and selfish heart is able to discover, he is perfectly right in saying, what every such fool must say if he is true to his own experience, "There is no God." With this inability to see God, there usually, but not always, goes one or more of the many forms of the murderer's question, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Now Jesus never wasted breath in trying to prove to such men the existence of God. On the contrary, he plainly told them that it is absolutely impossible to see God from that point of view; or find their heavenly Father in such an experience as that. For this is the meaning of the saying, "Neither doth any know the Father,

save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him." In other words, it is in the filial experience that the Father must be found.

What, then, is the filial experience? How does the Son reveal the Father? Where shall God be found? The answer to these questions is "Jesus' Way."

Instead of regarding other men and women as mere tools for one's own gratification, as mere means to one's selfish ends, which is the essence of sin, one may recognize that they are alive with the same warm affections, eager interests, and alternating joys and sorrows which he experiences in himself. One may make his neighbors' joys and sorrows as real to him as his own; work for their interests;

find joy in their successes, pain in their reverses, even as he has felt them on a smaller scale within his individual heart. This is love; the beginning of righteousness; the essence of the spiritual life.

This enlarging sympathy, however, once started, does not stop with our fellow men. To a heart once opened to sympathetic appreciation of other human lives, animals, plants, even the mountains and seas, the fields and streams, the processes of growth and decay, the revolutions of the heavenly bodies and the evolution of the forms of life upon our little planet, all reveal, if not a consciousness like ours, at least a life and purpose akin to those subconscious strivings after life which form the deep foundation on

which our own self-consciousness is reared. Sun, star, and stone; water, air, and earth; plant, fish, and beast, are all parts of one continuous process which culminates in man; from which the conscious life of man is inseparable, and on which he depends for the satisfaction of the hopes and aspirations with which he is endowed. Furthermore, this process is on the whole beneficent. The survival of the fittest is its law; which is only another way of saying that good, not evil, is its impulse and its goal. Now a process with an impulse, a law, and a goal, moulding matter into forms of beauty, controlling force for good ends and crowning it all with living beings capable of appreciating and furthering the process itself, is more than mate-

rial. It is personal. Its proper name is God; our Father; our Infinite Companion; our Eternal Friend.

Jesus, though by no means the first to recognize the personality of the God whom the cosmic process as a whole reveals to every sensitive and sympathetic heart, was original in the clearness and fullness with which he made this central spiritual insight the principle of the Way of life in which he walked himself, and which he commended to his followers and friends. In the beauty of the lilies, the color of the grass, the feeding of the sparrows, the rain and sunshine falling on just and unjust alike, the providence that watches over the unthankful and the evil, the faithful shepherd caring for his sheep, the

good Samaritan nursing the wounded traveler, the kind father giving good gifts to his children, and welcoming with robe and ring and feast and dance the returning prodigal, Jesus recognized and adored, working out on the universal scale of nature and humanity, the same Spirit of beauty, kindness, and beneficence, which he felt welling up within his own soul.

This simple experience of a love in his own soul responsive to the beauty of the world and the claims of human hearts, hid, indeed, as it is from the wise and understanding, yet transparent in every pure and childlike heart, inexplicable on any other hypothesis than that of a single Principle, infinite as nature, loving as man at his best, was Jesus' sole, all-sufficient evidence

of the being of God. He was himself the revelation of the Father; and the only way he could reveal Him to others was by making them admire the beauty of nature and serve the needs of man. For admiration of nature is participation in the Creator's joy; service of men is experience of the Father's love. And participation is the only evidence, experience is the only proof, which Jesus admitted for himself or commended to his disciples.

This evidence of God involved in the filial experience of adoration of nature and sympathy with men, hid from ecclesiasticism and scholasticism for centuries, is thus well fitted to become the light of life to our modern world. For it appeals from tradition,

and authority, and argumentation to the solid rock of experience. If you love nature and humanity, you thereby enter into and reproduce the creative love of the Father. You live a life which you did not create, but which you know is good, and infinite in range. Nature has no metes and bounds; the claims of our fellow men, embodied in the moral ideal, have no limits. The career open to love is infinite. It is the life of the Father, which each conscious child of his is privileged to share. No proof less than the actual experience of this life of love could reveal God to any man. Yet every man who has this experience is as sure of a divine life in the world as he is of his own existence. The filial experience has made the Father manifest.

The principle of Jesus' Way is, therefore, that there is one God, the Creator of the world and the Father of our spirits; of whom all natural beauty is the outward expression, and all moral duty the inward voice. To live in grateful adoration of all the beauty and beneficence the outer world contains, in sensitive obedience to every claim of human sympathy, is to walk in Jesus' Way. This is the one central principle which runs through Jesus' scattered teachings, the bond which binds them all together in the unity of a Way which is original, unique, supreme, divine.

That there are tares as well as wheat in the field of the world; that there are falling towers that crush and cruel men who kill, Jesus did not

deny. Yet, because there was no trace of hate or malice in his own pure heart, he refused to believe that these accidents and crimes were evidence of any malice in what we should call the Father's motive; however they might be permitted as incidental in a universe where individuals were to be intrusted with the perilous prerogatives of self-consciousness and free will. In all this wanton wickedness he saw the working of a hostile principle. "An enemy hath done this." Yet the enemy was one which it was his mission to conquer and dislodge. Indeed, through cheerful acceptance of the burdens which human sin brings upon the world, Jesus revealed in himself, and communicated to his followers, that element of sacrifice which is

the deepest and tenderest quality of the Father's nature; and in the lives of Jesus and his true followers is the most complete and adequate revelation of the Father's heart.

CHAPTER II

THE SON: THE INCARNATION OF THE WAY

"Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" Luke ii. 49.

"Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." Luke iii. 22.

"And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Luke iv. 6-8.

"And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth: and they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" Luke iv. 22.

"And they go into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes." Mark i. 21, 22.

"And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth. And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils." Mark i. 38, 39.

"And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Matthew viii. 20.

"And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God." Mark x. 18.

"Howbeit I must go on my way to-day and to-morrow and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!" Luke xiii. 33, 34.

"And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother." Matthew xii. 49, 50.

CHAPTER II

THE SON: THE INCARNATION OF THE WAY

To disentangle the Father's love of all his children from the conflicting evidence of human perversity and natural accident, as Jesus did by the spiritual genius of his soul, is a task which not every one is able to perform for himself. In most of us the mixture of good and evil which we see without is reflected in a similar mingling of good and bad within. Hence we neither get by purity of heart clear assurance of God for ourselves, nor do we reveal Him to

others by purity of life. Having found God in his own soul, Jesus' great mission was to reveal Him to others, and introduce them to his Way of life, in which they would find God for themselves.

Born of a mother whose pure soul had been deeply imbued with the spirit of Hebrew prophecy and psalm, yet whose gentle human heart found its natural expression in becoming the mother of a large family of boys and girls, Jesus, while yet a boy, on his first contact with the Temple teachers, felt that he must be about his Father's business of showing men the Way.

Yet, at the very beginning of his work, he found the popular expectations of a Messiah who should recover

the national independence by the use of force, and head a popular revolt, standing directly across his path. He felt a growing sense that, through his sonship to the Father who loves us all, he was the true Messiah, foretold as the one anointed of the Lord to preach good tidings to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, liberty to the bruised, and the acceptable year of the Lord. All that he felt prepared to do. But this appeal to force, this leadership of revolt, this compromise with popular conceptions, was abhorrent to him. Yet how could he accomplish anything alone? How could he do his work without the only support which seemed available? At first the temptation to resort to phy-

sical, political, and popular devices for the establishment of his Way was very strong; and only after a bitter and protracted struggle did he put it behind him, and take up the homeless life of an itinerant teacher.

He gathered about himself twelve intimate disciples; for the most part plain men drawn from the humblest walks of life. At times he drew after him considerable crowds from Galilee, and Decapolis, and Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond Jordan; most of whom, however, were loosely and superficially attached to him, and easily discouraged. At one time he was able to send out as many as seventy whom he deemed competent and trustworthy teachers of his Way.

Through the faith which he in-

spired, and by virtue of psychical powers which he possessed, he healed diseases, cured certain forms of insanity, and did other wonderful things, which, far more than his teaching, spread his fame throughout all Syria. These acts of kindness and mercy were expressions of that love to all which he felt to be the nature of his Father, and of the Way in which all true sons of the Father should walk. Yet Jesus frequently deprecated as an obstacle to the inner apprehension of his Way, the wonder-loving, sight-seeing throngs which the fame of these signs attracted.

Though occasionally curious to know what people were saying about him, Jesus said comparatively little about himself. His favorite title was

The Son of Man; though he did not disclaim the title Son of God. He did disclaim, however, any unique and ultimate goodness, ascribing that to God alone. Yet so perfect was his obedience that his life revealed the Father's goodness, and his words declared the Father's holy will. Jesus translated into terms of human personality the very lineaments of the Father's nature. Since Jesus has lived, we need no longer to discover, each for himself, the scattered evidences of the divine love in nature, in other men, and in our own souls. Jesus has brought these scattered rays of the divine love to a focus in his own character and life; and we most easily and most completely gain our knowledge of the Father through his

reflection in the Son. For in the Son the Father stands revealed.

As this ethical sonship is different from the metaphysical, theological sonship of the ecclesiastical creeds, the evidence on which it rests is of an entirely different character. It is simply a question of the adequacy and supremacy of his Way. If his Way proves to be a mere collection and compilation of preceding precepts; if he teaches like the scribes, then no attestation of miracles and marvels can make us revere him as the unique Son of God. If, on the other hand, his doctrine is altogether novel, a code dropped supernaturally from the sky, or even invented by his own ingenuity, he thereby forfeits his claim to be the Son of the Father who had been

revealing himself to all his thoughtful and reverent children, and declaring his will in the legislation and institutions of all the nations of the earth.

Now Jesus' Way was neither old alone, nor new alone; but like the treasure of the householder, both old and new. All that was permanently valuable, to the last jot and tittle, in what the moral experience of the race had laboriously wrought out and enacted into custom and commandment, he reverently conserved. In the details of his teaching there is nothing that other men before him had not discovered, approved, and proclaimed. It could not be otherwise. For there can be but one best Way of life. All seeking after right-

eousness is an approximation to this one best Way. And when this best Way is fully revealed, it is simply the presentation in one single insight, as a comprehensive whole, of all the virtues, duties, laws, institutions, and ideals which human experience has discovered, enacted, sanctioned, and adored. The proof of the perfection of his Way, and of his own Sonship to God as the incarnation of that perfect Way, therefore, is purely experimental: If a man or a race, either before or after Jesus' advent, has succeeded in striking out a Way essentially different from Jesus' Way, which is at the same time superior to it, then this moral discoverer, this ethically superior race, not Jesus and the Jews, must be accredited with the

title of Son of God, and bearer of his revelation.

As a matter of fact, the vast majority of individuals, all indeed who have had the requisite experience of it, and all the leading races to whom his Way has been adequately taught, agree that his Way is the summing up of all that is best in the efforts of men and nations after righteousness; and that, although it is capable of infinite expansion, and application to details of which Jesus never dreamed, yet beyond or above its essential principles it is impossible for experiment to advance, or imagination to soar. In its range of application it is infinite and universal: yet in its reduction of this infinite variety of applications to the single principle of love to the God

who loves his whole creation, and every human child according to his needs, it is unique, final, unimprovable, and absolute.

The ethical supremacy of his Way is the evidence that Jesus is the well-beloved Son of God. Consequently the only adequate confession of him is, as he tells us, implicit obedience to his words, and faithful following of his Way. Because his own Sonship is ethical and spiritual, rather than metaphysical and theological, it therefore follows that every one who reverently walks in his Way, and lovingly does his Father's will, becomes thereby his brother and sister and mother.

CHAPTER III

THE KINGDOM: THE SPIRIT OF THE WAY

"Thy kingdom come." Matthew vi. 10.

"But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew vi. 33.

"And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke xvii. 20, 21.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened." Matthew xiii. 33.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is less than all seeds; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof." Matthew xiii. 31, 32.

"And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days, being tempted of the devil." Luke iv. 1, 2.

"In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit." Luke x. 21.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke xi. 13.

"And when they bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, be not anxious how or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say." Luke xii. 11, 12.

CHAPTER III

THE KINGDOM: THE SPIRIT OF THE WAY

To discover God in the harmony between the good in the world outside and the good in his own soul; even to reveal the good God in purity of life so plainly that all might see the nature of the Father incarnate in the Son, was but the beginning of the work which Jesus came to do. Had he done nothing more than this, he would have left his Way very imperfectly revealed: hanging in the air; hovering as a mere ideal before the minds of a select few. He sought

to make the Way of the Father the Way of the Son, also the Way of multitudes of common men and women in whom it should live as the Spirit of their individual and corporate life. In accomplishing this, Jesus performed the greatest feat of teaching, and achieved the grandest success in organization and administration, the world has ever seen. Yet Jesus took no credit for it to himself. The kingdom, and the power, and the glory, he ascribed to God. In other words, it was not because he proclaimed it so clearly and persuasively; it was because God had constituted human nature so that the Way of love to God and man is the true Way of life, that the community of those who adopted and proclaimed this Way

were able to become the mightiest social and spiritual force the world has ever seen.

The kingdom of heaven is the community of those who walk in Jesus' Way. In Jesus' teaching the kingdom is sometimes represented in the Messianic terminology of the times; sometimes projected into the world to come. But the fundamental conception, whether it be regarded as local or universal, present or future, is that of a community of persons, bound to the Father, and to the Son, and to each other by a common Spirit, which is begotten in them by walking together in the Way which Jesus exemplified and taught.

What manifests itself outwardly as a Way of life, when thought of in-

wardly and subjectively is the Spirit that animates and inspires this Way of life. Thus Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to meet his temptation. He rejoiced in the Spirit, when he thanked his Father that He had been pleased to make his revelation of himself to babes. The Holy Spirit is the best gift which the Father is sure to give to all those who earnestly ask and seek and knock. In times of peril, when arrested and brought to trial, the Holy Spirit shall teach the disciples in that very hour what they ought to say.

If we think of the Holy Spirit as the life and will of the Father, reproduced in the Son, and shared by all the members of the community who follow the Son in the doing of the

Father's will, all these passages become clear and luminous. It is the most natural thing in the world that Jesus should be led by this Spirit to meet his temptation; and that in this Spirit he should rejoice. It is also inevitable that God should give this Holy Spirit to those who earnestly and prayerfully seek to do his will; and that this same Holy Spirit should teach them what to say much better than their own devices.

The Synoptic Gospels teach that the will of the Father has been reproduced and revealed in the Son: and also that the life of both Father and Son has been imparted to a community or kingdom of true sons of God and followers of Jesus, in which it dwells as the Holy Spirit of a divine

life, of the same nature as the life of the Father and the Son from whom it is derived, yet distinctly and properly their own. The Holy Spirit is the inner aspect of that life of God in the hearts of men of which the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven, is the outward expression and visible embodiment.

CHAPTER IV

FAITH: THE GRASP OF THE WAY

"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward." Matthew x. 40, 41.

"And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee. And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." Matthew vi. 5–8.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Luke xi. 9, 10.

"And shall not God avenge his elect, which cry to him day and night, and he is longsuffering over them? I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Howbeit when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Luke xviii. 7, 8.

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Matthew xvii. 20.

"Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." Luke xxii. 42.

CHAPTER IV

FAITH: THE GRASP OF THE WAY

Psychology is telling us that all our interpretation of personal life is either ejective or projective; either explaining the ways of others in terms of our own experience, or imitatively reproducing the ways of others in experiments of our own. The latter process is by far the more fundamental and instructive, and is precisely what Jesus meant by faith. Faith is the recognition of a goodness outside us, in the Father, in the Son, or in the spiritual life of Christian men and women whom we know, unattained

by us, yet adorable, imitable, and through adoration and imitation progressively attainable. The ejective attitude of the big boy showing off his accomplishments, and perfectly comprehending the little brother as an inferior reproduction of his own superior attainments, is arrogant, conceited, and followed exclusively would make one a brute and a bully. The projective attitude, on the contrary, or the attitude of faith, is preëminently meek, modest, humble, teachable, childlike; ready to believe that there is a Way of life better than one's natural reactions, quick to admire and reverence that better Way in others, and willing to try whatever imitative experiments give promise of making that better Way one's own. He who

will throw himself out toward another in adoration and imitation must be modest about his own attainments. That is why Jesus insisted on humility as the condition of the apprehension of his Way. For without humility, faith, or the imitative reproduction of another's experience, is unattainable. And without such self-projection into the superior experience of another, spiritual growth and life is obviously impossible.

While the ultimate object of Faith is the Father, and the perfect working of his holy will, yet, since Jesus has translated that perfect will into the limitations of our human lives, it is much easier for us to project ourselves into his experience than to aim directly at the vast, and to our feeble

imaginations vague experience of God. Since Jesus was the true Son, faith in him, the aspiration to be like him, comes to the same thing as aspiration to be like God, or faith in God. "He that receiveth me," he says, "receiveth him that sent me."

This truth, in words at least, the church has generally accepted as an obvious corollary of its acceptance of Jesus as the Son of God. There is another truth which goes with it, and is an equally obvious corollary of any rational and worthy doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus states with equal explicitness, but which his followers too often have forgotten or explained away.

Admiration and imitative appropriation of a good man or woman, for the

MEADVILLE
THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL.

sake of the goodness they embody, is appreciation and appropriation of Jesus, and of the heavenly Father. For if it be genuine goodness in the friend whom I admire and strive to be like, that goodness of his is not something different from the goodness of Jesus and the goodness of God. Goodness is one, whether in the Father, in the Son, or in the Holy Spirit which animates the lives of Christian men and women. Hence, a godly father, a sainted mother, a devoted teacher, a faithful Christian friend, is the most obvious and immediate object of our faith: through admiring imitation of the Way in them, we approach the perfect expression of the Way in Jesus, and as Plato in a famous passage teaches, ascend

on this ladder of created souls to the ultimate goodness as it is in God.

Startling as this teaching sounds in our modern ears, it was the power by which the early church conquered the world. Sacramentalism and sacerdotalism are poor, pale counterfeits, almost caricatures, of this tremendous truth, that the goodness of good men and women is off the same piece as the goodness of Jesus, and is a genuine aspect of the goodness of God; and therefore a legitimate and valid object for the faith or projective appropriation of other men to lay hold of, and grow into, and make the stepping-stone of their salvation. To conceal this truth under some rite, or confine it to some official, is to rob the modern church of the chief source

of the primitive Christian community's persuasiveness and power. Fortunately, however, this truth is so great that the ingenuous perversity of men cannot hide it; and under whatever forms, ceremonies, and doctrines the various ecclesiastical organizations have adopted, the saving grace of God, in which plain men and women have believed to their salvation, has always been interpreted by the sweet and simple Christian lives of upright men and gentle women, devout priests and faithful pastors, sincere teachers and generous friends, in and through whom Jesus' Way has found its local, temporal, and individual expression.

Once started through some human agency, faith tends more and more to lay hold directly of the perfect char-

acter of Jesus, and the ultimate goodness of God. For, strange as it seems to the uninitiated, God is more accessible to the approach of faith than is our nearest and dearest friend. The expression of this approach of faith to the Father is prayer.

Prayer is the aspiration to be like God; the expression of willingness that God should make one like himself. Its first and foremost petition is that the Father's perfect goodness may be a hallowed and hallowing presence in the soul. Next comes the desire that the community of those who know and love Him may be extended in the world; and that his goodwill may be done on earth even as it is where his love reigns supreme. With this goes the willingness to

gratefully accept the satisfaction of our daily needs as a gift from his beneficence. Petitions for forgiveness of our sins, restraint from temptation, and deliverance from evil follow to complete the expression of the faithful soul's desires.

Prayer which is thus born of faith, and is simply the child's grasp of the Father's hand for guidance and support, is an entirely different thing from that mechanical and ostentatious saying of prayers which seeks to curry favor with God, or gain a reputation for piety with men, by performing prayer, like fasting or almsgiving, as a meritorious act. Such prayers merely blind and harden and stultify the soul that resorts to them. Proceeding on a false idea of God, as a Being to

be conciliated and won over by meritorious performances, they miss that union of what is best in us with the Father who is its source, which is the true reward and answer to prayer. The less a man says about his prayers, the less conscious he is of doing anything specially meritorious in his worship: the more spontaneous and secret and natural and unconventional it is, the better.

While Jesus warns us against all formalism, ostentation, and insincerity in prayer, yet he enjoins constancy and even importunity in prayer as the very secret of the soul's life and growth. No great work can be done without it. For prayer keeps ideal and motor process in vital contact; member and kingdom in living touch;

child and Father in close companionship. Like faith, of which it is the emotional and personal expression, prayer keeps the love and will of the Father, as interpreted by Jesus and embodied in the Spirit of the community, in the position of a controlling ideal and motive of conduct. Consequently, the man who truly lives a life of prayer comes to partake of the divine omnipotence; and a group of persons bound together by such a common recognition of the Father's love and will become, for the accomplishment of any purpose that is in accordance with his will, practically irresistible.

Though one's natural desires, as for daily bread, and for deliverance from trial and temptation, may rightly enter

into one's communion with the Father, yet we do not get the complete union of ourselves with Him, which is the end and essence of prayer, until all these partial, transitory desires of ours are overruled by the crowning desire, expressed in Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane: "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." In short, prayer is not a device for getting God to do our will, in so far as our will differs from his; but it is an indispensable and invaluable means of getting his will done in and through us, when our wills desire to be one with his will, but are all too weak and unsteady to accomplish alone what He can make them strong to do. An ideal allowed to drift out of consciousness is as impotent as an electric car cut

off from the power station. An ideal present in consciousness is as potent over life, and the world which human life affects, as is a dynamo over the movements of a connected car. Prayer is the making and maintaining of spiritual connections between the individual soul and the great motive power of the goodness and love of God. That its answer comes chiefly through the medium of one's own steadiness and strength of purpose, and the coöperation of other human wills, is no more a denial of its reality and worth than is the intervention of a wire a denial of the direct and complete dependence of the car upon the power station for its motion. Wordless prayer, on the other hand, is as genuine a reality as wireless telegraphy.

All this, however, Jesus no more reasoned out than he did the existence of God. He simply practiced it; and found, as everybody does, that with this constant communion with the Father's loving will one can do anything in the world he then desires to do; and that without such communion one's spiritual aspirations fade away, and one's spiritual achievements come to naught.

CHAPTER V

REPENTANCE: THE ENTRANCE TO THE WAY

"And one said unto him, Lord, are they few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke xiii. 23, 24.

"Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew xviii. 3.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew vii. 21.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew xi. 28–30.

"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke ix. 62.

"Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matthew xx. 26–28.

"Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" Matthew vii. 3.

"Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke xii. 15.

"If thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire." Matthew xviii. 8.

"Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they that were bidden were not worthy. For many are called, but few chosen." Matthew xxii. 8, 14.

CHAPTER V

REPENTANCE: THE ENTRANCE TO THE WAY

When once seen by the pure eye of faith, Jesus' Way of love to all, even as the Father loves, in a community of mutual service like that which Jesus himself manifested and inspired in his immediate followers, is something so different from the natural way of self-seeking, so superior to what we all do when we act out our animal appetites and passions, and seek our selfish ends and aims, that no one can enter this Way without a radical change. A new Way of life involves as a matter

of course a new attitude of mind and heart. The invitation is to all: to the merchant in spite of the importance of his business; to the sinner, because of his greater need; to those who are dissatisfied with themselves, because of the assured satisfaction the kingdom will afford; to the weary and heavy-laden, because the burden of service and the yoke of love which Jesus puts on all who enter the kingdom is lighter far than the burdens of social ambition and the yokes of selfish ends; and this lighter and easier task of simply doing one's best in the loving service of all will bring to these weary and heavy-laden souls the rest they crave.

Yet of the many called comparatively few are chosen. For the Way of love is narrow, and few there be

that find it. Children, on whom the heart-hardening processes of self-seeking have not yet laid hold, and sinners conscious of their guilt and ill desert find the entrance to the Way most readily. For humility is natural to the child, and others' condemnation has brought the flagrant sinner to a point where his need of forgiveness and a new start is obvious.

There is no room in the kingdom, no place in the Way, for pride, sensuality, selfishness, meanness, cowardice, hypocrisy. Whoever tries to carry any of these things in the Way simply shuts himself out of it. It is too narrow to admit one swollen out and loaded down with these excrescences and incumbrances. The man who thinks himself better than others

thereby shows his own fundamental lack of the Spirit of universal kindliness and gentleness which is the essence of the Way. He who is first in his own conceit is last in genuine appreciation and love for others, and therefore last in the Way. He who seeks distinction and preëminence rather than usefulness and service thereby confesses his fitness for only the lowest seat, if indeed he be fit for any seat at all at the feast of the Lord of love. He that exalteth himself by that very act decrees his own abasement. The intensity of one's devotion is limited. The more he bestows on himself, the less he has left for the Father and his fellows. By the latter, not the former, he gets his station in the Way, his rating in the kingdom of heaven.

The desire to be waited on and served, unless it be merely incidental to a larger service of one's own, is a mark of unfitness for admission to the Way. All attempts to live at other people's expense, by fraud or dishonesty, by influence or favor, by riches or power, are a denial of the Spirit of the Way, and involve, as a matter of course, exclusion from it. Here lies the peril of wealth. If it makes a man centre his affection on what he can get rather than what he can give; on being served rather than serving; on material enjoyment rather than spiritual exercise; on the lust of the flesh instead of the love of the spirit,—then his riches, because they take the love out of his heart, take the man out of Jesus' Way and exclude him from

the kingdom of heaven. Yet riches are not an insuperable obstacle to one's entrance to the Way. Indeed, they may be a help. If used as an instrument of service and an expression of love to the Father, and to his children according to their need, the stewardship of wealth, whether in effective industrial management, or in judicious charities, may become, as indeed it is in multitudes of Christian men to-day, one of the highest and noblest manifestations of that loving service of God and all his children in which the Way consists.

What is true of wealth is true of station, reputation, power, influence, ability. Sought as ends in themselves they draw one's affections away from that love of God and our fellow men

which is Jesus' Way. Used for the service of the kingdom, they add enormously to one's efficiency in the Way; so that the neglect to develop and use them to their full capacity would, as also in the case of wealth, be an evidence of lack of love, and a just ground of exclusion from the kingdom.

Censoriousness, harsh judgment of others, a disposition to get something for one's self which the less deserving cannot share, since these are not the manifestations of love, are sure marks of one's own exclusion from the kingdom of heaven. People, like the elder brother, who measure their own righteousness by the standard of their brother's failings, have in reality very little righteousness to measure any

way. For the root of righteousness is love; and where love, even to the outcast and the prodigal, the sinner and the criminal, is wanting, it is but a hard, dry shell of legality, not the warm heart of genuine righteousness that remains. Out of such selfish, censorious, cold, conceited creatures as this elder brother and his whole tribe of Pharisees and self-styled saints, even the Almighty could not make a warm, genial, generous, happy heaven if He tried.

Sensuality on the same principle excludes one from the Way; not on the false ascetic ground that sensuous pleasure is bad; but simply because one cannot serve two masters; because sensuous pleasure often conflicts with that true regard for one's own welfare

and the welfare of others which is the substance of the Way. Jesus never condemned sensuous pleasure as such. In all his warnings there is the saying, "If thine eye offend, pluck it out." He never says that a maimed life is good in itself, or preferable to a whole life, in which every appetite and passion has its appropriate action and fruition. He simply says, what every sound ethical system from Plato and Aristotle to the present day affirms, that when the part conflicts with the whole, when the member interferes with the organism, when the passing indulgence is fatal to the permanent interest of the self as a whole, then the appetite or passion must be repressed. The strait gate of love to others excludes many an indulgence

which selfish passion prompts. That is why the readiness to pluck out the eye or cut off the hand is a condition of admission to the Way. Such temperance is the price love has to pay for being consistent with itself, and true to those who are its objects. To gratify each appetite, so far as is consistent with that universal love which is the spirit of the Way, is the Christian ideal. But to leave this or that particular desire ungratified is far better than, through sacrificing some other person's welfare or happiness to a selfish passion, to fail to truly love that person, and so fall altogether out of Jesus' Way.

There is no asceticism about Jesus' Way. To be sure, all lesser goods must be remorselessly cut off when

they conflict with the supreme claim of love: and this often gives the Way an ascetic aspect in the eyes of those who see the lesser good denied, and cannot see or appreciate the larger love affirmed. Jesus never asks us to cut off any natural appetites unless they offend: unless, that is, they put us in false and harmful relations to others. For every physical pleasure foregone, the follower of his Way cannot fail to secure a greater spiritual good. Healthy natural appetites are not bad; nor are they to be brooded over in morbid introspection and self-condemnation. They all have uses essential to the individual and the race. They become bad only when they lead us to treat others as we would not be willing to be treated if we were in their

place,—as we would not wish one dear to us to be treated by another. Lack of love in this plain, practical sense of the word is the only sin; and natural appetites and passions become sinful only when they lead us to sacrifice ourselves or others to merely transient and sensual ends, at cost of permanent purity and peace. To be sure, Jesus does mention incidentally the truth, which physiology knows well, that intense and protracted devotion to such ideal interests as those to which his Way leads ultimately tends with years and maturity to abate, if not to extinguish, the fires of even harmless and innocent physical appetites; on the principle that the heart follows its treasure. But this is a counsel of perfection expressly directed

to those who are able to bear it; and on no account to be made a pretext for morbid worrying about the natural appetites and passions with which the good Creator has liberally endowed all healthy persons.

No one who hears and understands the invitation to this Way can safely postpone acceptance. To postpone acceptance is virtually to decline. For one who can feel the Father's love for him and for all, and admire that love in the life of Jesus and his followers, and still can look back longingly to the old life of selfishness, or count his domestic affairs or his merchandise of more consequence, is incapable of that high loyalty, that perfect self-devotion, which the Way demands. He is not fit for the king-

dom of heaven. Even while he deliberates, his heart is hardening, and erelong it will be fast closed against the appeal of the love he has thus presumed to slight and stifle. Obstinate refusal to coöperate with others in such expression of the life of love to God and man as the times and circumstances have established may indicate such a self-centred hardness of heart as rightly to exclude from the feast one who deliberately refuses to grace it with a wedding garment. Yet the garment itself, whether it be rite or ceremony, creed or profession, is worse than worthless if it be used as a cloak to cover any lack of that love to all which is God's life in us, and therefore the true and only Way. Of all the leaven men have mixed, that of hy-

pocrisy is the least consistent with the Way. Except one's righteousness go deeper than creed or ritual or profession, to the love which should inspire them all, he shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER VI

FORGIVENESS: THE RESTORATION TO THE WAY

"And whensoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." Mark xi. 25.

"Then came Peter, and said to him, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." Matthew xviii. 21, 22.

"Then his lord called him unto him, and saith to him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou besoughtest me: shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due. So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts." Matthew xviii. 32–35.

"And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, said unto his disciples, He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners. And when Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." Mark ii. 16, 17.

"And Jesus said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke xxiii. 34.

"And turning to the woman, he said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest me no kiss: but she, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven." Luke vii. 44–48.

CHAPTER VI

FORGIVENESS: THE RESTORATION TO THE WAY

Once admitted to the Way, once knowing the joy of letting the Father's love for all our fellows flow through our own hearts and lives, nothing, not even our own sins and lapses, if we promptly repent of them, can ever keep us out of it. For whoever has once entered the Way knows that so long as he was in it, so long, that is, as he lived the life of love, he never felt aught but pity for those who were outside of it; never could help forgiving an offending brother the moment

he repented and asked to be forgiven. Now that forgiveness which we show to our brother, Jesus says is the sure, experimental proof which every Christian has that the Father forgives his sins whenever he goes astray and returns in genuine penitence. This proof is sufficient. There can be no other proof. A Christian who did not forgive his brother would not be a Christian. And even if such a Christianity were possible, it would have no assurance of the Father's forgiveness. It is the glory of Christianity that it tells us we know just so much of God as we reproduce in ourselves, or trust in others who, like Jesus, have reproduced his nature and done his Will. It is a revealed religion. It is an incarnation. All of which means

that we interpret and appreciate God by what is best in our fellows and ourselves. If we have risen to the height of the love that forgives the penitent, we have not thereby risen above God. If we forgive others, He can do no less than forgive us. If we have not risen to that height, we have no assurance that He will forgive us. Unwillingness to forgive others, therefore, is a denial in ourselves, and in our own experience, of the very quality which in God is the only ground on which we could hope to be forgiven.

One who does not love cannot know what it is to be loved; one who does not forgive cannot know what it is to be forgiven. The gift at the altar, the church service of song and prayer and sermon, is utterly profitless

and useless; it cannot bring forgiveness of sin or knowledge of the Father to any man who hath aught of unkindness or uncharitableness toward his brother hidden in his heart. For the God of grace and mercy remains an untranslated word in the ear of every man who cherishes hardness and hate in his heart.

This forgiveness, like love, of which it is a special phase, can have no numerical limits. It must be repeated until seventy times seven. How true that is in the more intimate human relations. Parent and child, even wife and husband, all persons whose lives touch each other at numerous and sensitive points, can walk together in the Way of love on no cheaper terms than this of forgiveness until seventy times

seven. He who would walk in this Way must care more for his brother as he is in himself than for what his brother does to him, or what he can get out of his brother. All our irreconcilable difficulties and differences come from this lack of love; this putting what others do or fail to do to us before and above what they are, and what we can do and be to them. Selfishness cannot forgive. Love cannot help forgiving. That is why the readiness to forgive until seventy times seven is one of Jesus' favorite tests of membership in his kingdom.

Forgiveness, however, is, like all spiritual relations, reciprocal. Without penitence on the part of the offender, there can be readiness to forgive, but not forgiveness, on the part

of the offended. Neither God nor man can forgive the impenitent; simply because forgiving one who should still cling to his fault would be participation in the fault. Such a mush of sentimental indulgence would undermine the foundations of all righteousness. It is our duty to tell a brother his fault frankly: first to him alone; then to bring to bear on him the influence of two or three mutual friends; and finally, if need be, the moral force of the whole circle to which he belongs. If he defies all these personal influences, and persists in his perversity in spite of all these personal appeals, he thereby denies his membership in the kingdom, renounces the Way of Jesus, and becomes to us as a Gentile and a publi-

can; — a man, that is, toward whom we still cherish kind feelings, for whom we wish the best material prosperity, and for whose spiritual good we never cease to labor and watch and pray; but one toward whom we need not, because we cannot, manifest that intimacy and complacency which obtains between persons who are mutually conscious of their union with the same Father, and are striving to walk together in his Way.

This forgiveness which Jesus teaches he practiced himself. The diseased man, broken down by dissipation; the outcast woman, disheartened by the cold scorn of the very society that tolerates and abets her ruin; the penitent thief upon the cross; even his own murderers, are the

objects of his pity, his forgiveness, his promises and prayers. Authority to forgive sins Jesus confers as a matter of course on every one who has known the Father's forgiveness of his own sins, and feels prompted by the same forgiving Spirit to forgive others.

No one, not even he who reviles the name of Christian, and blasphemes against the Son of Man, should be beyond the pale of our forgiveness. For he does these things, as the murderers of Jesus did their cruel deeds, not knowing what he does; blinded by prejudice and ignorance. Even avaricious, lustful, cruel men, who have wrecked and ruined our lives, or the lives of those dear to us, bitterly as we may denounce their deeds, heartily as we must hate their vices and sins,

if they repent, must be forgiven by us, as they are by the Father. For the man is more than his deeds. He can rise above his baseness. And who are we, when he is trying to rise, to presume to thrust him down? Certainly not sons of the Father; not followers of Jesus' Way. With the single exception of those who know what love is and scorn it, so that the offer of love to them would be casting pearls before swine and giving that which is holy unto dogs; with this single exception, our love and forgiveness must have no bounds, no limits. And this single limit is one which the hardness of the offender's heart puts upon us; not one which we of ourselves erect.

Finally, Jesus tells us that these

people whom we find it hardest to forgive, those who have done most wrong and feel deepest guilt, are the ones who appreciate forgiveness most, and consequently love most. The pardoned penitent makes the best disciple; for he appreciates, as the ninety and nine just persons too often do not, the infinite difference between the warm life of mutual sympathy and love within the kingdom and the coldness and isolation and bitterness of the sinful, selfish life outside.

CHAPTER VII

LOVE: THE LAW OF THE WAY

"And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the whole law, and the prophets." Matthew xxii. 35–40.

"Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

"Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" Matthew v. 38–46.

"All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets." Matthew vii. 12.

"And he entered into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and them that bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold the doves; and he would not suffer that any man should carry a vessel through the temple. And he taught, and said unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? but ye have made it a den of robbers." Mark xi. 15–17.

CHAPTER VII

LOVE: THE LAW OF THE WAY

EVERY rational plan of life must have its principle, or law. The law of Jesus' Way is love: love to the Father who loves us all; love to all our fellow men, who are as dear to the Father as are we ourselves. All specific rules and regulations, all ancient traditions and contemporary customs, all current maxims and conventional standards, are to be kept to the last jot or tittle, in so far as they express the conditions of man's well-being; but when they are set up as ends in themselves, as though man were merely

made for them; when they become obstructions to human welfare, then they are to be disregarded in loyalty to that love which is their origin and only justification. He who through lack of love should break the least of these commandments would be the least in the kingdom of heaven. Yet he who should not dare to break a tradition, which had been exaggerated or perverted into an excuse for neglect of some duty which love demands, would thereby exclude himself from the kingdom altogether. To break the traditional Sabbath for the sake of doing good is the only way to preserve and fulfill its essential spirit. Institutions and laws are made for man, and express the love of the Father who seeks the impartial good of all.

Love is at once the source and the fulfillment of all law. Love defines our neighbor as the man whom we can help, and measures our duty to him by what we would wish for ourselves. Love swears by no oath, for those whom love binds need no extraneous bond. Love is not covetous; for it would scorn to profit by another's loss. Love excludes lust; for lust would make another a mere means to selfish ends. Love will not commit adultery; for the destruction of pure family life for others is too costly and cruel a price for love to pay for a passing pleasure.

Love will not kill, either suddenly with a sword, or slowly by unkindness; for love gives and enhances life. Love will not steal, either goods

from the counter, money from the purse, value from stock, or time from an employer; for the interests and rights of others and of one's self are one to him who shares the Father's love for all. Love will not be proud; for the weakness of another, with whom one's own strength is contrasted, is, to him who loves, a sorrow as keen as though that weakness were his own. Love will not hate even the sinner and the man who does wrong; for this wrong-doer's fault, and the low spiritual estate which it implies, will call forth so much pity that, in comparison, the wrong it inflicts upon us will seem slight. Even our enemies and our persecutors we will pray for, and stand ready, at the first opportunity, to forgive and help; since love can

do no less. Love would soften the hard heart of an unloving husband or wife, rather than indulge its hardness by easy divorce. It would expand the selfish nature of an ungrateful child, rather than find in pious observances a pretext for neglect of filial obligations.

Even legitimate self-assertion should be waived, when by parting with coat or cloak, or going the double distance with an exacting brother, or letting an unreasonable person have his own way on unessential matters, we can maintain a friendly relation, which keeping the coat, or declining the long walk, or insisting on what we deem the wiser way would strain and break. Even the whims, moods, and morbid apprehensions of sensitive, nervous

people, even when we see clearly their utter absurdity, must be treated with all seriousness and consideration, if we would really love them in all their disabilities. For the personal is worth more than the material. The love without the cloak is worth more than the cloak without the love. A long walk with sympathy is better than a short walk ending in bitterness and alienation. It is often better to be on good terms with a person by letting him have his own way, even though we do not like it, than to be on bad terms with him as a result of insisting on what we consider a better way of our own. He who has not had abundant occasion to recognize this principle cannot have had much experience of close contact with many men of

many moods and minds. Without this principle constantly applied, most homes would be unendurable; most friendships would be short-lived; the kingdom of heaven in any of its more intimate aspects would be impossible. That people generally have found this counsel of Jesus a hard saying is simply an indication of the general hardness of the human heart; a revelation of how blind the world still is to the most obvious and elementary principles of the spiritual life. For without the constant application of this principle, no man who is more than a recluse, no man who is a member of a family, or does a complicated business, or takes his part in politics, or combines with other people in any enterprise, can maintain those pleasant personal

relations which are the most essential marks of Jesus' Way.

Yet even love has limits in the limited capacity of others. While all men are to be loved, love will express itself toward the Gentile and the publican, who cannot understand it and might mistake courteous concession for weakness, in a different way from that in which it will express itself toward brethren who are also sharers in the Way of love, and know how to interpret its acts of kindness and forbearance out of their own experience. Affections that are holy are not to be given to those who will misinterpret them in terms of selfishness or sensuality. The pearls of self-denying love are not to be cast before swine who will take all they can get, and then

give all the credit to their own shrewdness or hardness in extorting it. Love has its stern side. It will put the personal above the material every time. It will turn the other cheek to the smiter, when that method promises better personal relations than resistance. But when the whip of small cords promises to be more effective in bringing hard and heartless men to their moral senses, love will use that as the Master did. To show a bad man the pain his badness brings to others, by making him feel the sting of its pain and shame in his own smarting body and stinging conscience, is often the very best favor we can confer upon him. If we were as blind to moral issues as he is, it would be good for us to have our eyes opened in just that

painful way. Indignation, reproof, rebuke, denunciation, punishment, are all perfectly consistent with love; all are abundantly represented in the recorded utterances and actions of the Master; all are required of the parent, the teacher, the judge, the ruler, the manager of men and affairs, who seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness in these practical concerns. Whether a man is a disciple of Jesus or not does not depend on whether he follows Jesus' precept of non-resistance or his practice of resistance, in any particular case. If he were to follow either line exclusively, he would thereby fail to be a follower of the Master who inculcated and practiced both. Jesus' Way simply requires that both our resistance and our non-

resistance shall spring from love for the person concerned. Non-resistance through weakness, or cowardice, or indifference, or negligence is just as foreign to Jesus' Way as is resistance through wrath, spite, hate, or revenge. To remember that the unreasonable, unjust, cruel, treacherous man is a man for all that; to show him the goodness of the better Way by gentleness, if I may; to show him the meanness of his own way by harshness, if I must; but whether I take the one course or the other, to have his best interests all the time at heart,—that is Jesus' Way.

Since the basis of love for one's neighbor is the appreciation of one's own interests and claims, the Way of Jesus does not discourage but rather

enjoins shrewdness in the maintenance of one's rights, in warding off captious critics, and in repulsing impertinent intruders. The wisdom of the serpent is by no means incompatible with the harmlessness of the dove. Presence of mind, such as the unscrupulous exercise in the practice of injustice, may well be drafted into the defense and service of the Way.

Neither is the disciple of the Way called upon to wear himself out under a load of borrowed troubles or morbid conscientiousness. When one is tired, it is at once his duty and his privilege to rest. To lose the sense of quiet cheerfulness in the presence of the Lord by elaborate housekeeping, or multiplied charities, or promiscuous philanthropies, or assumed responsi-

bilities, is to sacrifice, for unprofitable superfluities, the one thing needful. While all powers are to be used to the utmost, the waste of overwork and the worse wastes of fret and worry are to be shunned no less than the rust that follows disuse. The riches of the spiritual life are to be guarded as carefully as a sensible householder guards his worldly goods. For he who will serve others best must keep himself in prime condition. It is a poor, short-sighted generosity to leave our lamps incapable of shedding light, and to exclude ourselves from the feast, in order to give away our oil to people who are too shiftless to provide it for themselves. Spiritual thrift, which guards the springs of nervous energy, and keeps the fountains of

cheerfulness and health full and overflowing, is an essential condition of walking joyfully in the Way ourselves and winning others to it.

The only thing we need be concerned about is the purity of our motives. If these are right, if the tree is good, the fruit will follow in due time. For outward results, into which many factors enter, we have no responsibility beyond this fundamental one, to be sure that what we do is done in love to all whom it affects. Nothing external can harm us; for it cannot decrease our love to God and man. What goes out from a man in word and deed, that defiles him if it proceed not out of a heart full of love. Evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings, be-

cause all these express a selfish and sensual heart in which no true and tender consideration for others dwells, — these defile a man. But disregard of rites and slight esteem of ceremonies do not defile a man, unless they imply a lack of consideration for the people who use and value them.

The love which is the open secret of Jesus' Way is no mere soft sentiment luxuriating in the sense of its own sweetness. Nor is the expression of this sweet experience in words enough. Many will say, "Lord, Lord," in all the ardor of emotional ecstasy, to whom he will reply, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Nor yet is the doing of good deeds a sure sign of belonging to the Way. For good deeds, like

prayers and fasting and alms, may be done in pride and ostentation. Good deeds done in the spirit of love, however, like the care of the wounded traveler by the Samaritan, are the sure signs of the Way. For this Samaritan did not merely relieve his own sensibilities by relieving the unfortunate man's immediate sufferings. He bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow he took out two pence, and gave them to the host and said, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee." That is, he made the wounded man's condition his own, and saw the case

through, as faithful when absent as he had been when present. That is the test which marks off true Christian love from sentimental charity. Do our works revolve about ourselves, our own activities, our own sensibilities? Then we are philanthropists, workers, anything you please; only we are not Christians; we are not in Jesus' Way. For true love shares the whole personal problem of its object, and strengthens the will of him whom it serves by sympathy even while it helps him bear his burden. A very little of this sympathetic sharing of life's whole problem with a few individuals will take one farther along Jesus' Way, and do more genuine and lasting good, than a hundred times the amount of money and strength spent

in promiscuous and merely institutional charity; though, in our complex modern life, generous contributions of time, money, and strength to great organized philanthropies and charities are indispensable means of expressing the Father's love, and our own, to the great masses of our fellows who are beyond our personal reach.

CHAPTER VIII

LOYALTY: THE WITNESS TO THE WAY

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew v. 13–16.

"Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father which is in heaven." Matthew vi. 1.

"And he that received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away. And cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew xxv. 20, 21, 29, 30.

"What I tell you in the darkness, speak ye in the light: and what ye hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops." Matthew x. 27.

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest." Matthew ix. 37, 38.

"Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Matthew x. 32, 33.

CHAPTER VIII

LOYALTY: THE WITNESS TO THE WAY

THE first duty of those who have learned the blessed secret of Jesus' Way of love to God and man is to be loyal to it and spread the good news abroad. The Way is itself spiritual, invisible. It can be seen only in the persons and lives of those who walk therein. Hence the disciples are the salt of the earth, and must keep the savor of this new life sweet and strong in their own souls; they are the light of the world, and must let their good deeds shine far and wide to reveal to those who sit in the

darkness of natural selfishness the beauty of this better Way. Yet this letting one's good deeds shine to the glory of the Father and the honor of the Way is in no wise inconsistent with the complementary duty to modestly conceal one's own individual merit in the work he does, letting not the left hand know what the right hand doeth, and giving all the glory to God who is the inspirer of it all. Not to show off one's good deeds in personal vanity, nor to conceal them from timidity, but in self-forgetfulness to let God's goodness shine through us, is the mark of perfect loyalty.

The Way must be everything or nothing to us. Our eye must be single. We cannot serve two masters: God and mammon; love and selfish-

ness. Every deed, every transaction, every vote, every idle word, either reveals or obscures the Way; is either for Christ or against him. Each man who has found the Way is bound to become a fisher of men to draw them into it; a worker in the busy vineyard of society, a laborer in the ripe harvest of humanity. As the Master went from town to town preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, the disciple, whether he goes abroad or attends to his affairs at home, is bound to make himself a living witness and embodiment of the Way, so that men may see at least its outward fruits in all he says and does. Ultimately this Gospel must be brought, both by precept and example, to all the nations of the earth. By word and deed, by influ-

ence and support, by action and endurance, each disciple is called upon to prove to the world that the kingdom of goodwill, the Way of love, is at hand. For the lives of those who walk in the Way, in kindness, mercy, gentleness, and sincerity, are the only witnesses of its reality. Supernatural agencies, were they available, would be useless. Men must be drawn to the Way by men who are already in it, and who embody and manifest its spirit and life. Hence each disciple is responsible for the full use of his powers. The more one does, the more will he be able to do. Fidelity in little things is the indispensable training for larger usefulness.

Though fruit is demanded of all, and the unfruitful tree is doomed, yet

the Lord is patient, and will give even the fruitless tree fresh digging and dressing year after year before He cuts it down. Outward profession of loyalty to the Way, which says, "Lord, Lord," is of less consequence than that inner loyalty of spirit which does the Lord's goodwill in daily life. The best fruits are mercy, not sacrifice; righteousness, not ritualism; performance, not profession. No slightest deed shall pass unnoticed, or fall into forgetfulness. The value of the outward act is to be measured exclusively by the inward spirit that prompts it; so that the mite of the poor widow may be the greatest gift of all.

Witness to Jesus and his Way is of two kinds. The more conspicuous witness, which consists in "taking

part in meeting," attending church, teaching in Sunday-school, contributing to organized Christian missions and charities, is highly important. No one can be thoroughly loyal to Jesus without taking his part in some one or other of these organized expressions of his Way; provided he sees and feels that they are worthy embodiments of it. But of still more importance, though less conspicuous and less easily enforced, are "the little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love" which are the "best portion of a good man's life." These are manifestations of the Way itself; while the other sort of witness is at best an identification with some of its outward agencies and expressions. The just, kind, generous, public-

spirited, cheerful, helpful life is the very essence of the Way; and, while it is desirable both to say, "I go, sir," and to actually work in the vineyard, if it is a choice between the two, the latter is preferable.

CHAPTER IX

SACRIFICE: THE COST OF THE WAY

"The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold, a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! And wisdom is justified of all her children." Luke vii. 34, 35.

"And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them the things that were to happen unto him, saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles: and they shall mock him, and shall spit upon him, and shall scourge him, and shall kill him." Mark x. 32–34.

"In like manner also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save." Matthew xxvii. 41, 42.

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Matthew x. 37–39.

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and depise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matthew vi. 24.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." Matthew vi. 19–21.

"And Jesus said unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And when the disciples heard it, they were astonished exceedingly, saying, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them said to them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." Matthew xix. 23, 25, 26.

CHAPTER IX

SACRIFICE: THE COST OF THE WAY

EVERY interpretation of Jesus' Way has insisted on the cross as its essential symbol. Yet the reasons which have been offered for this necessity of sacrifice on the part of Jesus and all his followers have for the most part been wide of the mark. Starting with the erroneous conception of a God of wrath and vengeance to be appeased, they have missed, as a matter of course, the necessity of sacrifice as the expression and revelation of a Father of love. Yet love calls for sacrifices of which wrath and vengeance never dream.

The greater the love, the greater must be the sacrifice. The Father who loves all his children must bear the sins and sorrows of all upon his suffering heart. And the Son who reveals the Father, all sons who share his nature and receive his Spirit, must suffer in exact proportion to the degree in which they enter into the Father's purpose and do his loving will.

To bring this out, however, requires a clear view of the origin and nature of sin. And this in turn calls for a thorough analysis of human nature.

Men by nature seek their own selfish good. Their appetites and passions, their ambitions and aspirations, their instincts and impulses, are the conditions of their self-preservation and the perpetuation of the race. As

such, they are innocent and good. No blame attaches to the Creator who gave them to us; nor to ourselves, so long as we act them out in blind response to their immediate suggestions. The perfect picture of this natural innocence we see in normal animals. Their wants, like the means of gratifying them, are immediate and finite. And though there is struggle and strife and war and death when animal wants come into competition, yet there is no deliberate selfishness, and therefore no sin and conscious guilt. The animal, keenly intent upon its own gratification, is incapable of representing to itself the misery it incidentally inflicts on its competitor and victim. We indeed can look on the act in a light which makes it seem bad. But

the animal lacks that light, and so escapes the condemnation such light would bring. Now the natural, unenlightened man sins in much the same innocent way that an animal sins. In a rude, primitive society, the robber band seldom stop to think of the hardship they inflict on the poor villagers from whom they wrest their herds and crops. The prostitute falls in the first instance, as a rule, through the tenderest, sweetest, holiest impulse of her sex. The man who patronizes houses of prostitution does not realize that in so doing he is a partner in the most wholesale system of murder and degradation civilized society continues to permit. The saloon keeper is usually a man of genial, kindly heart, utterly oblivious of the domestic misery which is the

counterpart of his easily gotten profits out of weak men's appetites. The promoter of unsound enterprises and the wrecker of sound ones, the manipulator of other people's property intrusted to his official care, scarcely appreciate the widespread want and woe resulting from their unscrupulous transactions. Indeed, these men and women who fall lowest in our moral scale often do so in consequence of an excess of those very traits on which the welfare and perpetuation of the race depends. The saloon keeper has often a great deal more of the milk of human kindness in his heart, and is a much better fellow to spend the long winter evenings with, than the temperance reformer who swears out the warrant against him. The harlot on

the street often retains more of generous womanliness than the querulous, censorious matron in her luxurious drawing-room, robed in outwardly spotless respectability, but inwardly full of vanity and pride and exclusiveness and uncharitableness. The men who drive hard bargains and grind down their employees are often at heart quite as well meaning as the pale, impractical moralists and socialists who rail at them, but have not the energy or enterprise to earn a decent living for their own families. The wild college boy who breaks all rules and regulations, academic, moral, civil, often has in him elements of strength and winsomeness and charm which his irreproachable and studious classmate sadly lacks.

Now Jesus saw all this with perfect clearness; and in consequence he liked these impulsive, spontaneous, excessive men and women, and became the recognized friend of publicans and sinners. Of course that shocked beyond all bounds the sensibilities of the consciously virtuous and respectable, the scribes and Pharisees, and brought on him their enmity and hate. Yet Jesus could do no less. The Father loved these publicans and sinners; pitied their blindness; understood the strength of their sensuous impulses and uncontrolled desires. The Pharisees and scribes did not love them; did not understand them; despised and hated them. Jesus had his choice to side with his Father and the prodigals, outcasts, and harlots whom the

Father loved; or to side with the supercilious Pharisees, who loved nobody but their precious selves, and so fall out of the Father's love altogether. Jesus deliberately accepted the envy and malice of the Pharisees and chief priests; and they, aided by the avarice of the stupid Judas, the slander of the frivolous rabble, and the servility of the stolid Pilate, nailed him to the cross.

More than that, Jesus made enemies of many of the very men whom he befriended. For with all his liking for these blinded and impulsive sinners, he abhorred their sins. He lost no opportunity to show the extortioner how mean was his devouring of widows' houses; the libertine how cruel was his lust; the harlot how shameful

was her life of degradation; the devotee of riches how unworthy was his idolatry; the proud man or woman how loveless and repulsive were their hard and hollow and sepulchral hearts. Hence many who were at first attracted to him, when they saw themselves as he saw them, were angry, walked with him no more, and were ready to turn against him at the first opportunity.

The better a man is, the more bitterly will all evil men hate him: partly because of the rebuke he brings to their sin; partly because of the resistance he offers to the successful execution of their sinful schemes. On both grounds the chief priests and Pharisees had abundant occasion to hate Jesus. The obsequious reverence

which the multitude had bestowed on them was in danger of being transferred to this more genial, friendly, sympathetic teacher of the new Way. Hypocrisy, extortion, adultery, pretentious piety, hollow legality, overelaborated ritualism, at once became in the eyes of the multitude the manifest contradictions and obscurations of the Father's will which they were in the pure eyes of Jesus. To save themselves and their respectability, they had to crucify Jesus. His death was the penalty he had to pay for being the faithful Son of a loving Father and the generous friend of sinful men and outcast women, in a world where organized pride, pretense, heartlessness, and hate were enthroned in religious, social, and political affairs.

There is an element of truth in calling it a ransom he had to pay to the evil principle dominant in the world, as for centuries the early Christians did. But we are nearer the simple facts of the primitive Gospel if we regard it as the price love had to pay for being true to itself in a world where pride and hate were in possession of the religious system, the social prestige, and the political power. Jesus could have revealed the Father's love in the world as he found it in the Palestine of his day, on no easier or cheaper terms than winning the envy and malice of the men who were in influence and power, and losing his life in consequence. To be a friend of sinners and a foe to sin, as Jesus was; to love the lowest in their blindness, yet

to drag the sins of the loftiest into the searching light his Father's love shed upon them, was a work no man could hope to accomplish who held his own life dear. Jesus saw clearly that his Way would lead him to "suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed;" but to the suggestion that he turn aside from his chosen Way he replied, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men."

What Jesus experienced himself he expected and foretold would be the lot of his disciples. "Then Jesus said unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

The Way of Jesus is no exception to the universal rule that we cannot have one thing without giving up a host of competing things for the sake of it. Life is shot through and through with tragedy. "All action is guilt," as Hegel says. We must murder one or more alternatives in every difficult choice we make. One course of conduct adopted means a hundred other possible courses sacrificed. How much the scholar must give up of outdoor life, for which nevertheless the appetite is not wanting! How much of rest and tranquillity the ambitious statesman must forego! How sacrificial of almost everything else worth having is the life of the man who makes haste to get rich! How ready to give up all else for the one woman

of his choice is every faithful lover! Sacrifice therefore is unescapable. Yet there are two radically different ways of making the sacrifice. One may save himself and his immediate selfish interests by sacrificing the interests and happiness of others. That is the essence of all meanness and sin. Over the camp of all the cowards and criminals, all the thieves and liars, all the libertines and debauchees, is written the inscription, "They tried to save themselves; others they would not save." All sin is parasitic. It saves itself by sucking the life out of something better than itself. Every sinner of every stripe belongs to the genus parasite. Evil has not the strength to stand alone. It must always fasten on to something better than itself to

hold it up. The sinner is a sponge, a dead beat, getting his life out of somebody's death; buying his mean and miserable pleasure at cost of another's cruel pain; making his despicable gain out of another's pitiable loss. No man could be enough of a fool to wish any form of sin to become the general rule. He can only wish it as a mean exception in favor of himself. A few examples will make this clear. A student cheats in an examination. He may gain a petty advantage by his sneaking act. But suppose everybody cheated; and the school or college winked at it. Then even the cheater would gain no advantage; for neither to him nor to anybody else would the diploma of such an institution, gained on such terms, be worth

the parchment on which it was inscribed.

A lie, put under the moral microscope, reveals the same parasitic character. Whatever vitality and usefulness, even for the liar's sordid ends, a lie contains, is sucked out of the universal respect for truth which generations of truth-telling men have laboriously built up. If everybody were a liar, lies would not be worth the telling. They are available only as exceptions to a general truthfulness which they are doing all in their power to break down.

Dishonesty likewise, whether it be pilfering, or housebreaking, or fraudulent book-keeping, or the promotion of unsound enterprises, or accepting secret rebates and commissions for

contracts executed in a representative capacity, or securing personal and family favors through political pull, or drawing a salary in a position for which one is incompetent or in which no substantial service is rendered, when placed under the moral microscope, reveals this same trait of sacrificing other people for one's own advantage. The dishonest man is a parasite, saddled on to the back of honest labor, from which he gets his living, to which he gives little or nothing in return.

Gambling is parasitic: for the value of the chips or wagers the young clerk or student plays for is all borrowed from the honest toil of an upright employer or honest father, whose productive industry creates the substantial values these stakes represent. A

society in which gambling was the rule and industry the exception would be as badly off as the fabled island of the sea, in which all the inhabitants supported themselves by taking in one another's washing.

Drunkenness is another notoriously parasitic sin; in which the dissipation of one is bought at the expense of others, by saddling on them the galling burden of a perfectly wanton and needless poverty and want. It is the gigantic social and economic parasite of the modern world.

Yet the cruelest and meanest parasitism of all is licentiousness. All that is sweetest and dearest in our own lives we owe to the

> "Relations dear and all the charities
> Of father, son, and brother."

No one of us would wish to have been born as the product of the passing passion of some heartless creature, too mean to own either mother or child. No one of us would wish to rear our own daughters for the brief, bitter life of the brothel. Every instinct within us recoils from the merest suggestion of the homeless, heartless, loveless life into which we should all be plunged were licentiousness to become universal. Licentiousness is a shameless parasite, feeding on and destroying the precious institutions and relations which generations of pure and chaste souls have slowly developed. Of all the forms of parasitism and meanness and sin, this, which with one hand clings to the family life, to which we owe all that is best in our-

selves, on which hangs all our hope for our children, and with the other does all in our power to rob some other person, or a whole class of persons, of all the sweetness and sanctity which family and home mean to us and to our children, — this is the foulest, the cruelest, the most odious to the Father, the most intolerable to Jesus, and the most inconsistent with his Way.

Now Christian sacrifice is the exact opposite of all this. It is saving other people at sacrifice of all of self that is inconsistent with their welfare and happiness. As the motto stamped on all sin is, "He saved something for himself at the expense of others," the motto of every true Christian is that jeeringly yet accurately ascribed to

Jesus on the cross, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." The honest student sacrifices the petty gain in rank dishonesty would bring him, and thereby saves the honor of the school and the worth of its diplomas. The truthful man foregoes many a paltry advantage a lie might bring, and thereby saves for himself, and society with him, the social confidence on which civilization rests. The upright business man time and again must sacrifice the chance to make a fortune for himself out of widespread disaster brought on innocent investors, trusting employers, or defrauded employees; but he saves the property and welfare of thousands, together with his own modest competence. These honest men are in the great majority.

Gigantic as are the parasites of dishonesty which fasten on our complex business system, yet their very bulk and number are so much added evidence to the essential soundness of the industrial system which can support them.

The same is true of drunkenness and licentiousness. There are obviously a great many things one cannot do who walks in Jesus' Way of a considerate love to all whom his acts affect, and who would save for others the pure, happy home life he so much values for himself. If you call that sacrifice, why then the Christian life is sacrificial at these points; for it is on the renunciation of these cruel and costly pleasures that all domestic and social life worth living rests as on

a rock. The pure lives and happy homes which such self-control and self-sacrifice have made possible are the crowning example of what those who walk in Jesus' Way have done to save others with themselves, and promote the glory of the Father and the welfare of the world.

The principle of sacrifice, in some form or other, is, as we have seen, inherent in human finitude. The cross of Christ simply brings this principle to its ultimate application, as a choice between the sacrifice of others for our own mean, sensual, and selfish ends, and the sacrifice of what is selfish, sensual, and mean in ourselves for the glory of the loving Father and the highest good of all. Sacrifice we must as often as we act. Jesus bids us sacri-

fice the low for the high, the sensuous so far as it conflicts with the spiritual, the little and transient for the infinite and the eternal, the partial aspect for the organic whole.

This principle, therefore, once for all divides the world into two opposing camps. On the one hand is the camp of those who save themselves by greed, at cost of others' privation; by corruption, at cost of others' oppression; by lust, at cost of others' anguish; by dissipation, at cost of others' misery; by falsehood, at cost of others' distrust; by cruelty, at cost of others' suffering; by unkindness, at cost of others' tears.

Over against all this, rightly intelligible only in sharp contrast with it, is Jesus' Way. This is the camp of

those who save the interests of others by scorning to shirk, or cheat, or lie, or hold back unpopular truth; by fidelity that gets no immediate appreciation; by perseverance that receives no outward encouragement; by endurance that attracts no public notice; by ten thousand nameless, unnoticed acts of unsuspected daily self-sacrifice for others' happiness, and for social order, domestic peace, and public good; by suffering on behalf of others' sins which remains a sacred secret locked within the silent sufferer's heart. These men and women who, in the arduous toil of great official responsibility or in the obscure drudgery of humble homes, in the joy of mutual affection or in cheerful renunciation of the tenderest happiness that has

touched their lonely hearts, in great wealth enjoyed without selfishness or effeminacy or in grinding poverty endured without envy or hardening of heart, bear cheerfully the cross of loving service to the people the Father has placed in their care and faithful performance of the duty that He lays upon them, — these are the salt of the earth and the light of the world; these, like their Master, are the redeemers of society and the saviors of mankind.

CHAPTER X

REVELATION: THE JUDGMENT OF THE WAY

"But there is nothing covered up, that shall not be revealed: and hid, that shall not be known." Luke xii. 2.

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." Matthew xxv. 34–40.

"Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in thy name, and by thy name cast out devils, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew vii. 20–23.

"But if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the unfaithful. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." Luke xii. 45–48.

CHAPTER X

REVELATION: THE JUDGMENT OF THE WAY

THE judgment of Jesus is simply showing a man what he is, in the light of what he ought to be. This revelation of a man to himself steals upon one unawares, like a thief in the night. The needs of some lowly and suffering fellow man, the secret decision between some costly right act which will pass unobserved and some profitable wrong act which will escape detection, are the times that try men's souls and bring out whether or not they be in the Way. The Judge

comes to us in the disguise of the lowliest of our fellows that claims our courtesy, our kindness, and our consideration. As we treat the least of the Lord's brothers, precisely so we treat the Lord himself. Hence judgment is inevitable. It is being passed upon us all the time. There will be no question on the final examination paper that has not been asked us again and again in the daily intercourse of life. Our answers are all written in advance, according as we have done or failed to do what love requires toward these brethren of ours, who are so dear to the Lord that service to them is the only service to himself for which he greatly cares. This judgment simply reveals outwardly, so that we and all who behold us shall

see precisely how much or how little of God's love for men is really in our hearts. If love be there, it will shine forth as the stars, forever and ever. If pride, lust, selfishness, unkindness, avarice, are there, they cannot be concealed; but in contrast to the pure white light of love that shines in the heavenly Way, they will stand out in undreamed-of hideousness and shame. Yet this judgment will be proportioned to light and opportunity. He who was mean and sensual because he knew no better will feel less guilt and shame than one who had seen the pure light of love in the face of Jesus Christ or some of his faithful followers, and then, in spite of that, had been base and cruel. The stripes will be few or many according as the light

against which one sinned was dim or bright. Judgment simply sends a man, as it did Judas, to his own place; puts him where he belongs, — in the kingdom of heaven, if he lives a life of love; in the outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, if he lives a life of selfishness and hate.

This transparency of character which results from setting a man where the light of love falls on him, as it does on all who come in contact with Jesus' Way, involves a radical reversal of all human judgments which are based solely on rank, wealth, reputation, and profession; making the last in the world's estimation the first in the kingdom of heaven, and making those who are first in their own esteem last in the favor of God; showing

that the poor, if they are in the Way, are rich and happy, while the rich, if they are out of it, are poor and miserable.

This judgment is obviously automatic. There is nothing arbitrary about it. He who walks in the Way enters the kingdom as a matter of course. He who loves shares God's life, which is love. He who declines to walk in the Way of course never reaches the heaven to which it is the only entrance, strait and narrow at that. He would be more miserable if he got in than he is outside; for the brighter the light of love that should shine upon his sordid and sensual soul, the greater would its shame and ugliness appear.

There will be no more chance to

complain of one's fate than for bad fish to resent their exclusion from the basket of good fish, or the goat its not being classed as a sheep, or chaff and tares for not being stored in the barn with the wheat. Judgment simply brings to light what the man has been doing to himself all the time. There is no favoritism. Inherent excellence gets its full premium, and the lack of it has to pay the last farthing of inexorable penalty. Not profession, not achievement, but effort, and the motive underneath the effort, is the basis of award; for that reveals the spring and core of character. Outward results enter into the judgment indirectly, as revealing the genuineness and thoroughness of the inner motive; for the earnest purpose in

the end always manages to make itself outwardly effective. Every honest effort counts in the final score, though it may be represented negatively by making a bad situation less bad than it otherwise would have been, instead of making it positively and perfectly good.

As we have seen already, one who should see the beauty of Jesus' Way, and then should deny him, would thereby reveal his unworthiness to be his disciple, and exclude himself from the kingdom. Yet many who never heard or thought of Jesus as an object of personal devotion, by sharing unconsciously in his spirit of love and service to the persons with whom they chance to be thrown, find out for themselves the same Way which Jesus

revealed to the world. All such are in Jesus' Way, although they recognize him not; and theirs is the kingdom of heaven. He that is not against Jesus is for him. Those who do the works of his Way are his unconscious disciples.

On the other hand, all the indolent and insincere, the corrupt and cruel, the proud and hard-hearted, whether they be clergymen or laymen, churchmen or infidels, magistrates or criminals, employers or employees, in spite of their professions and their respectability, will be banished to the place to which their inherent lovelessness dooms them in the words, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." The outer darkness is the shadow love casts when one

refuses to let it shine through him; and the greatness of that darkness is due to the fact that God lighted the capacity of love in his soul, and he has let it go out for lack of the oil of disinterested service, or else has deliberately put it out by the extinguisher of self-indulgence.

CHAPTER XI

BLESSEDNESS: THE REWARD OF THE WAY

"But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew vi. 33.

"Then answered Peter and said unto him, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee; what then shall we have? And Jesus said unto them, Every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life. But many shall be last that are first; and first that are last." Matthew xix. 27, 29, 30.

"A certain woman out of the multitude lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the breasts which thou didst suck. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." Luke xi. 27, 28.

"And turning to the disciples, he said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not." Luke x. 23, 24.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.

"Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Matthew v. 3–12.

CHAPTER XI

BLESSEDNESS: THE REWARD OF THE WAY

JESUS' Way is no exception to the hedonistic paradox that pleasure eludes those who seek for it directly, and that immediate concern for rewards, honors, and emoluments, because it withdraws one from the singleness of devotion to one's work and service, at the same time robs one of the rewards which single-eyed service and self-forgetful work alone deserve and insure. To be in the Way, to have one's name written in the book of this heavenly life, is its own sufficient great reward.

Therein the true disciple will rejoice; not in the high seat he gains, not even in the amount of work he is able to accomplish. So vast is the work to be done, so little is the contribution the best of us can make, that having done all, we shall count ourselves unprofitable servants. We shall rest our expectations not on our own merits, but on the goodness of the Lord, who weighs the motive rather than the achievement, and gives to first and last alike the equal compensation of knowing and feeling that they are accepted and approved workmen in his vineyard, heirs of all his goodness and love they are able to appropriate.

To demand or expect any other precedence than preëminence of use-

fulness is to miss the Spirit of Jesus altogether, and hence to be not first but last in his Way. The only greatness Jesus recognizes is greatness of service; and the chief joy he experienced himself and recommended to others was the joy of bringing lost sheep out of their cold, loveless lives into the warm light and life of his fold.

If, however, seeking rewards, here or hereafter, is the sure way to miss them, it is equally sure that he who seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness will incidentally get all the good things that he needs. Single-eyed devotion to the service of God and one's fellow men brings this about in two ways. Through withdrawing one's mind from him-

self and his individual appetites and ambitions, it diminishes enormously his demand on the world, or what Carlyle calls the denominator of life; and by increasing his efficiency and attractiveness to others, it brings in spiritual, social, and ultimately material returns which unscrupulous, heartless self-seeking never could gain, and so increases the numerator of life. While it is doubtless true that people who call themselves Christians are deprived of many things which they deem essential to their happiness; while accident, bereavement, misfortune, loss, deprivation, and the injurious consequences of others' sicknesses and sins fall on saint and sinner alike; while well-meaning people who look anxiously ahead and take the whole bur-

den of the remainder of their lifetime on the shoulders of each successive hour are unquestionably able to pile up mountains of misery for themselves and all who are so unfortunate as to be their relatives and friends;—nevertheless, the poorest man, the most maltreated woman, who begins each day with the eager desire to fill that day with loving service to God, and those whom He has placed under this person's influence and care, will find, in looking back at evening on the finished day, that it has not been without the opportunity for such service and the means for its effective execution; and if these opportunities and means have been improved, that no such day, even the darkest, has been altogether destitute of the brightness

of nature, the love of man, and the peace and blessing of God.

Jesus' words on this point are often considered extravagant, unpractical, utopian. So indeed they are, if applied to the natural man, whether nominal Christian or not, in a merely natural society, where self-seeking is the only impulse and competition is the only law. As proclaimed by Jesus, however, these warnings against anxiety, these assurances of spiritual, social, and material goods, are addressed to those who are his genuine disciples, in a community composed of disciples as genuine and generous as themselves. Considered in this their proper setting, these sayings of Jesus, so far from being paradoxical, are axiomatic. Suppose a town or

ward of five thousand people, all of whom begin each day with a grateful, loving, earnest desire to use their talents, powers, influence, and wealth for God's greatest glory and man's highest good: would any one of them have the slightest cause to worry, or would the most feeble and unfortunate member of such a community, even if it were outwardly organized on our present competitive industrial basis, ever come to material want, or social neglect, or spiritual despair? It would be impossible. Some fellow Christian would be the kindly medium through whom the unfortunate man's need of these things would find relief and satisfaction. If a half, or a fourth, or even a tenth of such a community were bound

together in such a spirit, this remnant would be able to cope with the worst consequences of the sin and selfishness of the other half, or three quarters, or nine tenths. Where God's kingdom really comes, there comes salvation, — for its members first, and for all others in proportion to their receptivity and the community's resources. If Jesus' promises regarding these things are not fulfilled in any particular town or city, it is because the kingdom in that town or city is not yet fully come. We don't quite believe that very many other people are really living in Jesus' Way; and too often the reason for this distrust of the essential Christlikeness of the lives of others is because we are not entirely devoted to Jesus' Way ourselves. Here as

everywhere we need to remember that the judgment we pass, even unconsciously, on our brethren is the condemnation of ourselves. If we were altogether absorbed in Jesus' Way ourselves, we should detect by subtle sympathy the indications of the same blessed Way in hosts of our fellows whom we now set down as "worldly" men and women, or at best mere nominal Christians, having the form of godliness, but without its real power.

That the Way does not insure the blessings Jesus attached to it, where it is not present, or where men do not believe in it, or where they distrust each other, is not surprising, and is no valid objection to his claims for it. Democracy does not confer all

the benefits claimed for that form of political government on every ward of every American city. But the blame rests not with the democratic form of government, but with the men who for selfish ends subvert its principles. Democracy worked by men who are fit for it, and who live up to its high requirements of public spirit and civic devotion, will do all that the most enthusiastic advocate ever claimed for it. Precisely so, Jesus' Way of life will give to every member of his community all the blessings he ever promised, provided it be a genuine community of those who make the love of God and the kindly care of one another their prime concern. Anything less than that is less than Jesus' Way, and must not be

accepted as a test of the truthfulness of his account of what his Way will do for those who earnestly and honestly accept it.

The beatitudes are obvious corollaries from the principles of the Way. Since love is the life of the Way, and since the opportunities for love are infinite and omnipresent, no true disciple of the Way can possibly miss his blessedness. The more of love in the heart, the more of blessedness will there be in the soul.

The poor in spirit are blessed, because their lowly hearts have room in them for that outgoing love to others which is the life of the kingdom of heaven.

Even the mourner, if his love is deep and wide and universal, cannot,

even by personal bereavement or individual disappointment, be shut out from the great life of love, and the comfort love always contrives to find in making others happy, even while its own heart aches in the sadness of irreparable loss.

The vain and conceited, just because they centre their interests and affections on their little petty selves, and what they are or fancy themselves to be, obviously live a poor, cramped, stunted, shriveled, impoverished life. But the meek, who think little of themselves, and turn admiring and affectionate eyes on others, thereby gain a boundless career for their devotion, and have the whole earth for their inheritance.

Those who hunger and thirst for

the finite material objects of human competition will naturally have repeated occasion to lament the smallness of the share of these goods they get. But there is no finitude in righteousness, no competition for the spiritual gifts of kindness and goodwill. Any man can have all these he asks for. He has but to knock, and the door that leads to these treasures is thrown wide open. This hunger and thirst are in constant process of fulfillment for every one who walks in Jesus' Way.

The merciless, of course, can expect no mercy. But the merciful, like magnets, draw mercy to themselves.

The impure heart can no more see God than darkness can comprehend the light. The pure heart, on the other hand, sees God as the infinite

Source and Inspirer of every pure experience in itself, and in the purified souls of others.

The man who stirs up strife, picks quarrels with his neighbors, and carries a chip upon his shoulder everywhere, naturally will know little of the peace of God which passeth understanding. On the contrary, the peacemakers, in turning away wrath by the soft answer, in forgiving until seventy times seven, in patient endurance of the slights and wounds and bruises incidental to close contact in domestic, social, business, and political life, will have the very joy of the Father in seeing kindness take the place of cruelty, love cast out hate, and happiness come in where wretchedness goes out; and will realize therein their own sonship to God.

Even persecution for the sake of the Master and his Way will not rob the disciple of his blessedness; for even through such suffering, serenely accepted and cheerfully endured, he will be drawn into sympathy with the prophets and martyrs of all ages, and share the deepest experience of the crucified Master himself. To be even as his Master, in this as in all respects, will be not the dread but the desire of every true disciple.

What blessedness is, as Jesus understood it, we can best understand by approaching it through the lower steps of pleasure and happiness.

Pleasure is the gratification of chance desire. The getting of anything we want brings pleasure; and the way to secure pleasures is to de-

velop a great variety of eager, active interests: in work and play; in study and art; in business and society. The more desires we have, provided we are able to gratify them, the more pleasures we enjoy.

Happiness depends on the progressive, systematic gratification of desires which have been reduced to unity through some central principle. Since doing good is an interest in which we have to fight no competitors, and in which God, the forces of the universe, and the goodwill of all right-minded men are on our side, the desire to do good is the active interest most capable of continuous, progressive, systematic satisfaction, and consequently brings most happiness.

For righteousness is simply fitness;

goodness is what right-minded people want to have done. And the opportunities for doing it are as numerous as the situations in which one is placed. Righteousness takes an infinite variety of forms to meet the varied claims of situations and persons upon us. In the home it is kindness; in business it is honesty; in society it is courtesy; in politics it is public spirit; in work it is thoroughness; in play it is fairness; toward the fortunate it is congratulation; toward the unfortunate it is pity; toward the wicked it is resistance; toward the righteous it is active support; toward the weak it is help; toward the strong it is trust; toward the penitent it is forgiveness; toward God it is reverence and love.

Now the man whose interest lies in

so many-sided and omnipresent a thing as righteousness finds opportunities for satisfaction, and therefore for happiness, every moment of his life. No man who is more than a hermit can pass a single day without many a chance to make a glad heart still more happy or a sad one less lonely; to set a wrong will right or confirm a right will in its strenuous endeavor; to do some hard task so well that the world shall be the better for it; to bear some severe trial so bravely that all who see shall be strengthened. Every deed we do, every word we speak, involves a more or less of fitness to the highest possibilities of the situation; in other words, gives a chance to win the happiness that always goes with doing good.

To be sure, these chances to do

good do not stop and wait for us to improve them. They must be taken on the run, or they are gone forever. As the hunter takes his chances of a hit or a miss when he fires, and is sure to lose his game if he hesitates or delays, so he who would do good, whether in business, or politics, or in the more difficult and delicate sphere of personal influence, must say the right word and do the right thing instantly; without waiting to be sure how it is coming out. A quick estimate of probabilities, a flashing intuition of difficulty whichever course is taken, the certainty of being criticised in any case, and then the swift, irrevocable determination to do one's best and leave results with God, — all this, indeed, the righteous man who will

be happy in the doing of righteousness must have. Given this element of courage, and promptness to take risks on the strongest probabilities, which are the only guidance granted to us mortals, and every man who means to do right may count on substantial happiness as the sure reward alike of his successful and of his at times mistaken efforts to do right. For, as Stevenson says, "All who have meant good work have done good work, even though they die before they have time to sign it." The happiness which comes of meaning to do good work and accomplishing it up to the measure of our powers is within the reach of every man who intently and eagerly improves his chances the moment they appear.

Still we have not quite reached blessedness. Active interests of all sorts give pleasures. Interests that are generous, universal, non-competitive, of which the interest in righteousness is the great example, bring the enduring, systematic satisfaction which we call happiness. Yet blessedness is something more.

What this something more is, we learn, in human relations, alas! too often only through its loss. When father, mother, wife, husband, maturing child, or trusted friend, to whom our aspirations, affections, even our very sins, have been known by subtle sympathy so well as to make verbal confession superfluous, is taken suddenly away, then we know, through the sense of irreparable loss, the deep,

the infinite difference between the best that either a host of scattered pleasures, or even the happiness that goes with a life of constant usefulness, can give, and that supreme satisfaction of sympathy with one we love for which we reserve the third and highest name of blessedness.

This blessedness, of which we get glimpses in hours of intimacy with trusted human friends, and which every one who has experienced it knows to be as far above mere pleasure unshared, or happiness unreflected in the sympathy of those we love, as the heavens are higher than the earth, — this the devout man finds in communion and fellowship with God. This high and precious blessedness, to be sure, does not fall into the lap of

the spiritually indolent. To get it, one must exercise much of that union of appreciation and appropriation which Jesus calls faith, and which we express in prayer. To retain it, one must make his communion with God solid and real by faithful and, if need be, sacrificial doing of God's righteous will. To increase it year by year, one must coöperate with others in common efforts for social and spiritual ends. I grant this cultivation of the friendship and sympathy of God through private prayer and personal work and social endeavor is a hard, slow process, and does not bring its reward of supreme blessedness all at once.

Yet, to those who seek God in these earnest, practical, social ways, blessed-

ness as real as that we find in the most intimate human affections does come; it comes to stay; and it increases as the years go by. Such a man knows that God is with him, approving what he tries to do. He knows that Jesus' great work, begun nineteen hundred years ago, is being promoted by his efforts, and that through sharing Jesus' work here and now, he enters into fellowship with him forevermore. He knows that in his efforts to make the world the pure, sweet, healthy, happy world God would have it, he has the sympathy and support of all right-minded men and women in whom a kindred spirit dwells. The man who knows these things, and carries them about with him as the great, permanent back-

ground on which all his passing successes and failures, all his lesser joys and sorrows, are thrown, that man has the secret of blessedness in his heart.

Thus there are these three distinct stages or levels of the desirable. There is the life of pleasure, which is good; and which depends on the cultivation of a wide range of eager, active interests. There is the happy life which is better; this depends on the organization of life into permanent, generous interests, which can be gratified without bringing us into competition with others for goods that are finite and limited. Since the life of righteousness and kindness and goodwill is boundless in opportunity, and puts us not in competition but in coöpera-

tion with our fellow men, this is pre-eminently the happy life.

Above pleasure, which is good, higher than happiness, which is far better, comes blessedness, which is best. This springs out of the active interests which form the roots of pleasure; it is borne on the stout stalk of a righteous life, which is the support of happiness, but is in its inmost essence the perfect flower that blossoms out of the crowning assurance that God looks with something like approval on even our feeble and often mistaken efforts to do right; that Christ is with us in the aim and purpose of our lives; that all good men and women who are working out in individual form some private or public portion of the one great, common

social good are sharing the same Holy Spirit which is the inspiration of our hearts. This sense of the love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit is the crown of blessedness which, as a perpetual benediction, rests on all who with humility, sincerity, fidelity, and reverence walk in Jesus' Way.

CHAPTER XII

UNIVERSALITY: THE TRIUMPH OF THE WAY

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come." Mark iv. 26–29.

"Every one therefore which heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, which built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock." Matthew vii. 24, 25.

"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears, let him hear." Matthew xiii. 41–43.

"But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath set over his household, to give them their food in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he hath." Matthew xxiv. 43–47.

"If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the wilderness; go not forth: Behold, he is in the inner chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man." Matthew xxiv. 26, 27.

"In your patience ye shall win your souls." Luke xxi. 19.

CHAPTER XII

UNIVERSALITY: THE TRIUMPH OF THE WAY

PROVIDED the seed of a sincere and genuine love is planted in the heart, regularly watered by meditation and prayer, and fertilized by active exercise whenever occasion offers, one need not worry in the least about its steady growth and ultimate fruitfulness. To dig it up in anxious introspection is the greatest of mistakes; implying doubt of the Father, and distrust of the nature He has given us. The growth of Christian character, like all vital processes, begins in com-

parative obscurity, and requires considerable time. First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear, is the law of spiritual as of biological evolution; and we must be patient, trustful, and serene during the preliminary stages, which are the only ones to which the best of us attain in this brief earthly life. The contrast between what we are and what we hope to be, between ourselves and the perfect Father, is the great ground of our assurance of a blessed immortality of growth into the fullness of the stature of our Lord.

We should have the same serene confidence in the triumph of the Way in the world at large, and the final and universal establishment of the kingdom of heaven. Every one who sees

the Way as it is knows that there can be no other right way of life. It is so much better than the wrong ways that he is sure it must prevail. No signs to the contrary can overthrow this confidence. Though superficial emotionalists, and shallow ritualists, and even pretentious hypocrites seem to flourish and wear the very livery of heaven, there is no occasion for alarm. All that is hollow, external, insincere, will in due time come to naught. Every plant which the Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. For reality is stronger than pretense. Love is sweeter than hate. Good is mightier than evil.

When the Way is attacked, we need not bestir ourselves to bolster it up by extraneous props and specious

evidences. If we live out its life, speak the words of kindness and truth the Spirit of the Father prompts in our hearts, love its enemies and ours, the superiority of Jesus' Way will shine through by its own light, and demonstrate itself.

We must not measure the coming of the Way in the outside world, any more than in our own hearts, by immediate, visible, tangible results. For the kingdom comes silently, imperceptibly, like a thief in the night, like leaven hid in meal, like a tree, small at first, but in the end mighty and magnificent. There is at first no conspicuous change of form to which one may call attention, and say, Lo here, or Lo there. On the contrary, it takes up the old materials of habit,

custom, and tradition that lie ready at hand in the race, or community, or individual it enters, and gradually transforms them into expressions of the new Spirit of love which it imparts.

On the other hand, the old is not in itself more sacred than the new. The kingdom is not all innovation nor all tradition. It brings forth things new and old; the test in each case being appropriateness to express that love to the Father and to our brothers which is the essence of the Way. To preserve worn-out ritual, outgrown creed, antiquated phraseology, or effete institutions, when the living Spirit of love is prompting newer and better rites, statements, expressions, and usages, is to put stumbling-blocks across Jesus' Way. New occasions

call for new forms of expressing the eternal Spirit of love and goodwill. Yet in all our innovation, no jot or tittle of what the law of love requires shall ever pass away unfulfilled. The man who will express his love of God and men in some new form must keep alive his keen appreciation for this same love as it has expressed itself in forms the world has now outgrown. Above all, no one who in any form has entered into the Spirit of Jesus' Way will willingly shock or grieve even the humblest or narrowest of those who in some other form have entered into the Spirit of the same dear and blessed Way.

The consummation of the Way is not coming all at once; or without bitter opposition and cruel conflict.

Because of the iniquity still in the world, and the inherited hardness of men's hearts, there must first be wars and rumors of wars; nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. The hearts of many of the disciples even shall be caught in the toils of political, economic, and social selfishness still widely prevalent, and consequently grow cold. The disciples, through weakness and faint-heartedness, shall be divided, and betray one another. False prophets shall arise, and lead many astray. Tribulation, persecution, and hatred shall be the lot of the faithful.

Yet he that endureth to the end shall be saved. And the Way itself shall be proclaimed throughout the whole world, for a testimony to all

nations, before the end shall come. It is simply impossible that the world, or any portion of it, should go on forever, without having brought home to its conscience the ethical and spiritual supremacy of this Way which Jesus revealed as the true life of man.

The final triumph of the Way was presented and accepted by the early disciples, in pictorial, oriental imagery, as the coming of the Son of man on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, sending forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet to gather together his chosen out of all the earth. Yet in spite of such apocalyptic setting, warnings against localizing this advent, or presuming to predict the day or hour; warnings concerning its lightning-like surprise

and its universality, lead the disciple of to-day to see the progressive fulfillment of these prophecies, and the gradual coming of God's kingdom, in the multiplication of disciples over the whole earth, in the deepening of the spiritual life, in the transformation of social institutions, and the elevation of moral standards which have been going on ever since the Master parted from the little band of half-worshiping, half-doubting disciples. These forces and processes are to-day the promise and potency of the complete regeneration of humanity from natural selfishness to the Spirit of love, and the ultimate redemption of the world from sin and all its attendant evils into that blessed state where love shall be the universal law, and blessedness

shall be the inalienable heritage of every child of God; because all shall walk in Jesus' Way.

Individual immortality was never the burning question to the devout Jew that it was to the more speculative Greek. It is less explicitly treated in the Synoptic Gospels than in the Fourth Gospel and Paul's Epistles. Still, even in the Synoptic Gospels, eternal life is assured to all who leave houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for the sake of Jesus' Way. It is strongly implied in the whole tenor of the teaching; all the more strongly because taken for granted, as a matter of course.

Though the emphasis of Jesus' teaching was on the kingdom and the

Way, yet a kingdom is worthless without subjects; a Way is empty without souls to walk therein. The supremacy and eternal triumph of his Way of life, to Jesus' mind, carried with it the immortality of those who share with him that living Way. A lover does not pause in the first glow of passion to ask himself, or discuss with his mistress, how long this thing is going to last. That question indicates a later and less ardent, even if more philosophical, state of mind. The sons of the bridechamber cannot concern themselves overmuch about the future, as long as the bridegroom is with them. Questions on this point Jesus answered with a clear assurance of eternal life; but he did not introduce them, nor dwell on them. He

felt within himself a life which, though men might kill his body, could not die; but was strong enough to rise and rule both this world and the world to come. Instead of advancing formal arguments for immortality, he was intent on imparting, to as many as would receive it, this Way of life, which gives to each soul who has it his permanent place in God's good universe; his individual share in the Father's own eternity.

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